

Docket No.: 5259-000070/US/NP  
(PATENT)

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

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In re Patent Application of:  
Masaki KITAHARA et al.

Application No.: US National Phase of  
PCT/JP2005/018187

Confirmation No.: N/A

Filed: Concurrently Herewith

Art Unit: N/A

For: VIDEO ENCODING METHOD AND  
APPARATUS, VIDEO DECODING METHOD  
AND APPARATUS, PROGRAMS  
THEREFOR, AND STORAGE MEDIA FOR  
STORING THE PROGRAMS

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Examiner: Not Yet Assigned

**FIRST PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT**

MS PCT  
Commissioner for Patents  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

**INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS**

Prior to examination on the merits, please amend the above-identified  
U.S. patent application as follows:

**Amendments to the Claims** are reflected in the listing of claims which  
begins on page 2 of this paper.

**Remarks/Arguments** begin on page 8 of this paper.